

'Egypt slams Israeli policy on Palestinian prisoners'
By Jpost.com Staff, Khaled Abu Toameh, The Jerusalem Post
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Riots follow funeral of Palestinian who died in Israel jail; Abbas: Israel killing Palestinian children; Egyptian FM urges int'l community to take firm stance against Israel's "inhuman practices"; two Palestinians hurt.

Egypt on Monday condemned Israeli policies concerning Palestinian prisoners in light of the death of Palestinian prisoner Arafat Jadarat in Israeli custody over the weekend, Kuwait News Agency KUNA reported.

In a press release, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed Amr warned that the continuation of Israeli policies will lead to an explosion of the situation in the region, according to the report.

KUNA cited Amr as saying he holds Israel responsible for any deterioration of the situation and calling on the international community to take a firm stance against Israel's "inhuman practices against the Palestinian prisoners."

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas responded Monday to the round of violence that broke out following the recent death of Jadarat. Abbas accused Israel of deliberately killing Palestinian children, in order to "sow anger" among the Palestinians.

"The death of young Arafat Jadarat shall not pass easily," Army Radio quoted the Palestinian leader as saying.

Hundreds of Palestinians hurled stones at Israeli security forces in the West Bank, earlier Monday, following the funeral of Jadarat who died Saturday in Israeli custody.

Some reports claimed that around 25,000 Palestinians had turned out for Jaradat's funeral, as his body was carried to his home village of Sa'ir from a hospital in nearby Hebron.

At Rachel's Tomb, near Bethlehem, some 150 Palestinians hurled Molotov cocktails and rocks at IDF soldiers, who responded with riot dispersal means on Monday. Rioters also hurled improvised grenades, which endangered the lives of worshipers at the scene, security sources said.

The IDF confirmed that a 16-year-old Palestinian was shot in the head by a rubber bullet earlier in the day. He was treated by an IDF doctor before he was transferred to Hadassah Ein-Karem. They noted that he was part of a group of Palestinians who was trying to set the guard tower by Rachel's Tomb on fire.

Another Palestinian seen hurling the grenade was shot in the leg using 0.22 caliber bullets, which is considered to be less dangerous by the IDF, and used after non-lethal anti-riot means such as tear gas has been used, the sources added. The grenade thrower was lightly injured.

In the Hebron region, some 200 Palestinians rioted, throwing Molotov cocktails, rocks, and and firecrackers at soldiers. The army responded with non-lethal riot dispersal means, being directing 0.22 caliber bullets at the legs of a ring leader, according to security sources. The ring leader was lightly injured and taken to hospital.

In Beitunya, near the Ofer Prison, some 500 Palestinians took part in a violent disturbance. Soldiers dispersed that riot as well. Six Palestinians were lightly injured in the clashes, and a soldier was very lightly wounded by a rock, receiving medical treatment on the scene.

Also Monday, Defense Minister Ehud Barak held a security evaluation meeting with the IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Benny Gantz, as well as with the OC Central Command, MAj.-Gen. Nitzan Alon, and the deputy police chief, Cmdr. Yisrael Yitzhak.

The head of the Israel Prisons Service, Aharon Franco, was also in attendance.

The meeting focused on the wave of violence in the West Bank, and ways to calm the area down.

Thirty-year-old Jaradat was arrested last week for throwing stones at Israeli cars in the West Bank, and died at Megiddo Prison four days later.

The Palestinian Authority claims that Jaradat, whose official cause of death was listed as a cardiac arrest, died as a result of brutal torture during interrogation. Israel says Jaradat's autopsy, carried out in Tel Aviv in the presence of a Palestinian coroner, revealed no signs of violence, and that the trauma caused to his body came from the medical emergency team's efforts to resuscitate him after he collapsed. The autopsy listed bruising on his shoulder, chest and elbows, as well as fractures of two of his right ribs.

IDF and Border Police forces had been on high alert Monday ahead of the funeral, and used riot dispersal measures to clear the area.

Jaradat's death triggered protests in the West Bank on Sunday, with hundreds of Palestinians taking to the streets and clashing with IDF soldiers. Clashes were also reported in Hebron, Ramallah and Bethlehem, Palestinian sources said, adding that at least 36 Palestinians were wounded during confrontations with soldiers.

Yaakov Lappin contributed to this report

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